



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

March 8, 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR BRIG. GEN. H. A. GOODPASTER
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Translation of Khrushchev's Letter
To The President Regarding Nuclear Information

I am enclosing an official translation of the letter from Khrushchev to the President which Ambassador Menshikov delivered in his meeting with the President this afternoon. The Russian language copy of the letter is also enclosed.

The Department will send its recommendations on a reply as soon as possible.

Thomas W. McElhinney
John A. Calhoun
Director
Executive Secretariat

Enclosures:

1. Official translation
of Khrushchev's letter
of March 3.
2. Russian language copy
of Khrushchev's letter
of March 3.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF LANGUAGE SERVICES

(TRANSLATION)

LS NO. 48207
T-60/R-V
Russian

Dear Mr. President:

I should like by way of the frank and friendly correspondence, which has been established between us and which has already acquitted itself in many instances, to exchange views with you on a question which in our opinion is of very great importance.

I could not but note your statements at the press conference on February 3 on the question of the possibility of the United States turning over to its allies secret information on nuclear weapons, nor could I fail to note the world reaction subsequent to those statements.

To be honest, at first I was hesitating as to whether I should make this matter the subject of my correspondence with you at this time. The final decision to address you with this letter was arrived at after I had convinced myself that your statements at the press conferences on February 3 and 17, as well as Secretary of State Herter's statement on February 8, were rather broadly interpreted in various countries, including those in the West, in a

His Excellency

Dwight D. Eisenhower,

President of the United States of America,

Washington, D.C.

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quite definite sense, i.e., as an expression of the intention of the United States to equip with American nuclear weapons, within the framework of NATO in particular, those of its allies who do not have such weapons.

The question touched upon by you is of such great importance that I believe it necessary even now to share with you certain considerations.



It is a well known fact that from the time when nuclear weapons were invented the secret of their production has been acquired by the USA, the USSR, Great Britain, and now to a certain extent by France. Other states so far possess neither the secrets of production of nuclear weapons nor the weapons themselves. We are in agreement as to the necessity of freeing humanity from the frightful threat of a nuclear war and of working toward the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. It is on this crucial problem that you and I reached complete mutual understanding during the memorable conversations at Camp David. It is for this very purpose that negotiations are being conducted by the USA, Great Britain, and the USSR on the prohibition of nuclear weapons tests, and soon there will begin a discussion of general and complete disarmament in the Ten-Nation Committee.

Of course, it is very important that none of the nuclear powers take any steps that could complicate the solution of the problem of complete elimination of nuclear weapons throughout the world.

The question arises as to what consequences would result from increasing the number of states having access to nuclear weapons. What would the result be in such a case?

It is

It is hardly necessary, Mr. President, to seek to prove to you, an outstanding military leader and statesman made rich in wisdom by life's experiences, that the cause of consolidating peace and eliminating the threat of a nuclear war would suffer serious loss as a result. It would enormously impede the solution of the problem of general and complete disarmament, which would of course provide for cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons and the liquidation of the stock piles thereof. It is obvious that the greater the number of states possessing atomic and hydrogen weapons the more difficult it would be to take the measures necessary for the complete destruction of this weapon under effective control. Indeed, let us suppose that the allies of the USA -- individually or within the framework of NATO -- actually have a nuclear weapon placed at their disposal, and that the circle of nuclear powers in the West is thus expanded. In such a case there would arise an absolutely new situation, in which the solution of the problem of eliminating nuclear weapons would be considerably complicated. In such a case we would also have every justification to hand over this weapon to friendly countries that might turn to us with a corresponding request for purposes of ensuring their security and defense.

Let us look at another aspect of the problem. Let us suppose that the secret of the production of the nuclear weapons or the weapons themselves are handed over to the Federal Republic of Germany. Is it a secret that at the present time in the FRG there have again appeared many

reckless

reckless people who cherish the hope of revanche for the Second World War? It is sufficient to recall only a recent statement by Mr. Adenauer to the effect that the German people are charged with a "special mission."

However Mr. Adenauer may have interpreted this "special mission," the fact must not be disregarded that if he were to have the nuclear weapon placed at his disposal he would be tempted to use it to fulfill this "mission." And can it be hoped that Mr. Adenauer's successors in the post of chancellor would be more peace-loving? With the present trend in the course of events in the FRG, the answer of course is no.

I consider it appropriate to point out that neither the Soviet Union nor the states allied with us experience any fear, of course, in connection with the belligerent statements of the German "revanchists." You realize that from the standpoint of our security we have no fear of the German "revanchists," even though they may be armed with nuclear weapons.

But it would be a great mistake if we, bearing a great responsibility for the fate of all humanity, should gamble on the readiness of our countries for any war with the most modern weapons. The Soviet Government considers it the main purpose of its policy to prevent the unleashing of any new world war, and to bring about the prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons and every kind of weapon in general. A widening of the circle of nuclear powers would create new obstacles on the road to disarmament and of course would immeasurably intensify the threat of humanity's sliding into the abyss of general nuclear war.

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However, I continue to believe, Mr. President, considering your statements that the course of events will run, not in the direction of increasing the number of states possessing nuclear weapons but in the direction of general and complete disarmament and, consequently, in the direction of eliminating the danger of nuclear war. Therefore, I hope that you will correctly understand the motives that have prompted me to appeal to you with this message.

For my part, I should like very much to have your views concerning the matters to which I have referred.

With sincere respect,

N. Khrushchev



March 3, 1960